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The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 29 October 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the position of Lebanon, in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 29 October 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Lebanese Republic
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants

Position of Lebanon in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

In preparation for the comprehensive periodic assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), Lebanon would like to note that ever since that resolution was adopted, it has devoted itself to the presentation of a paper that expresses its position with respect to the comprehensive assessment of the Secretary-General. Lebanon believes that from the day resolution 1701 (2006) was adopted, Israel has failed to honour its obligation to implement it or to withdraw from all occupied Lebanese territory, and has persisted in violating Lebanese sovereignty, thereby ensuring that no progress has been made in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) with respect to obliging Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and cease its infractions. Lebanon would like to draw attention to the following:

1. Lebanon reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and calls on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to fulfil its obligation to implement that resolution in full; and exert greater, serious, efforts to achieve a permanent ceasefire.

2. Since the last assessment, the Israeli enemy army has continued to violate Lebanese sovereignty in contravention of the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006). Those violations included the following:

(a) During the reporting period, the Israeli enemy army continued to violate Lebanese airspace, territory and territorial waters, committing 297 air violations, 45 sea violations and 59 land violations, in flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty and the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006), which calls for full respect for the Blue Line. Lebanon demands the immediate cessation of such violations and rejects any attempt to link them to Israeli allegations of arms smuggling.

Lebanon affirms that some 7,346 air, sea and land violations of the Blue Line and Lebanese sovereignty committed by Israel since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) constitute a flagrant violation of the aforementioned resolution and all other relevant United Nations resolutions, the most important of which is resolution 425 (1978) of March 1978. Between the Israeli onslaught on Lebanon in 2006 and February 2010 there were between three and four Israeli violations per day. Since March 2010 the daily average to date is 11 violations, in addition to repeated Israeli threats to destroy the infrastructure of Lebanon.

Those violations threaten international peace and security and constitute a flagrant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Lebanon calls upon the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel and oblige it to cease its daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to respect the international resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

(b) Lebanon reminds the international community yet again that Israel is seeking to undermine resolution 1701 (2006) by every means possible. On 7 December 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that resolution 1701 (2006) had collapsed.

(c) The networks of spies that were recruited by the Israeli enemy constitute a blatant aggression against Lebanon, an attack on its sovereignty and a flagrant violation thereof that contravenes international resolutions and, in particular, Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). More than 140 collaborators were recruited by Israel in order to assist its intelligence apparatus, and were under orders to undertake sabotage operations both within and beyond the areas of Lebanon in which the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is deployed. Those spy networks threatened national security by infiltrating Lebanese society and civil and military institutions through the recruitment of collaborators to work in the interests of Israeli intelligence. Those collaborators were ordered to undertake sabotage operations that included the detonation of explosives, the assassination of prominent Lebanese citizens, terrorist activities and attacks on Lebanese infrastructure. The networks, by using the collaborators to gain control over Lebanese land and mobile communications and eavesdrop on Lebanese citizens, also constituted an infringement of the security of communications in Lebanon that continues to this day, given that those collaborators provided Israel with the frequencies and passwords for the services of mobile telephone providers and their base transceiver stations, in addition to providing precise, in-depth studies on the operational procedures of mobile stations. Lebanon lodged a complaint with the Security Council with regard to the spy networks that were cultivated in Lebanon by Israel, in which it detailed some of the sabotage operations that they carried out on the direct orders of the Israeli intelligence services. That complaint was issued as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly (A/64/908-S/2010/460).

(d) On 27 June 2010, at 3 p.m., an Israeli enemy patrol abducted Lebanese citizen Imad Hassan Atwi, who was herding his flock inside Lebanese territory on the outskirts of the village of Saddanah, located between Shab'a and Kafr Shuba. Israeli enemy forces bound, blindfolded and beat him in full view of UNIFIL personnel, who attempted to intervene. But the hostile Israeli forces quickly withdrew into the occupied Shab'a Farms, dragging Mr. Atwi along the ground for more than 300 metres. They led him into a tent behind the Blue Line where they severely beat and tortured him until he lost consciousness. Israeli enemy forces then took him into occupied Palestinian territory, where he was interrogated by Israeli intelligence. On 28 June 2010, at 2.15 p.m., approximately 24 hours after having kidnapped him, Israeli enemy forces handed over Mr. Atwi to UNIFIL at the Naqurah crossing. UNIFIL in turn handed him over to the Lebanese Army, which took him to hospital because of his extensive bruises, contusions and other serious physical injuries. That abuse represents a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty, Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) and international law, and demonstrates yet again Israel's contempt for international resolutions. Lebanon lodged a complaint

with the Security Council which was issued as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly (A/64/853-S/2010/351).

(e) On Monday, 5 July 2010, at 6.30 a.m., an Israeli enemy military patrol comprising some 12 servicemen crossed the withdrawal line at Saddaneh, on the outskirts of Shab'a, and penetrated some 40 metres into liberated Lebanese territory. They searched the area before leaving at approximately 7 a.m. The entry of Israeli forces into Lebanese territory constitutes a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty, international law and Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), and a threat to international peace and security. Lebanon lodged a complaint with the Security Council which was issued as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly (A/64/912-S/2010/482).

(f) On Friday, 15 July 2010, at 9.45 a.m., a group of some 10 Israeli enemy forces infiltrated Lebanese territory from their Ruwaysat al-Alam position within the occupied Shab'a Farms area, penetrating some 31 metres into the Kafr Shuba area in an attempt to abduct Lebanese citizen Fadi Yousef al-Uqaybi, who was guarding his flock near Birkat Ba'tha'il in the environs of Kafr Shuba. Lebanese Army personnel were advised of the Israeli infiltration and warned the Lebanese shepherd that those men were probably coming towards him. He had no option but to flee in the direction of the Lebanese Army positions in the region, where the soldiers were placed on alert and adopted combat positions in the face of the mobilization of the Israeli enemy, which had also positioned several tanks in the area. That blatant Israeli attack on Lebanese territory heightened tension. It represents a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty, Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and affirms yet again Israel's contempt for international resolutions and its determination to continue to pursue its aggressive and provocative policies and to continually threaten international peace and security. Lebanon has repeatedly complained of the continual abductions that are carried out by Israeli enemy forces of helpless Lebanese civilians who are beaten and subjected to mental and physical injury, thereby affirming Israel's determination to pursue a policy of aggression against Lebanon. Lebanon demands that the Security Council should fulfil its responsibilities and take appropriate measures to prevail upon Israel to cease its violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to abandon its aggressive policy towards Lebanese citizens.

(g) On Tuesday, 3 August 2010, at precisely 7.45 a.m., the commander of the Lebanese Army liaison unit received a communication from the UNIFIL liaison unit to the effect that the enemy Israeli army intended to cross the technical fence in the area of Udaysah at 0800 hours local time, in order to cut down a tree. On examining the matter, the Lebanese Army became aware that demarcation of the area involved was disputed by Lebanon. The UNIFIL liaison unit officer conveyed that information to the Israeli side, stating that the Israelis were not entitled to take any action without prior coordination with the international and Lebanese sides. The Lebanese Army informed UNIFIL that the latter could, if necessary, perform the required task in place of the Israeli Army. The Israeli side persisted in its intention to cross the technical fence and cut down the tree. It did so in the knowledge that the Lebanese side had informed UNIFIL of its rejection of that move. The Lebanese Army and the enemy Israeli Army then entered a state of high alert on either side of the border. UNIFIL forces were also present. At 1145 hours, in order to cut down the tree, the Israeli Army brought in a hoist manned by one soldier, prompting Lebanese

Army personnel to fire warning shots into the air. The Israeli side responded with targeted fire towards the Lebanese Army, leading to an exchange of fire between the two sides. At 1245 hours precisely, the Israeli Army bombarded Lebanese Army positions at Nabi Uwaydah hill, Udaysah and Mashru' al-Tayyibah. Lebanese Army units responded with light and medium weapon fire. The Israeli bombardment resulted in the martyrdom of two Lebanese corporals and one Lebanese journalist. Eleven soldiers sustained various injuries. One civilian was injured and three personnel carriers caught fire. It was decided at around 1500 hours that both sides would cease fire. The Lebanese side complied at once. However, the Israeli side delayed for some time, and continued to bombard Lebanese positions before agreeing, as a result of UNIFIL efforts, to hold its fire. That Israeli act of aggression constitutes a flagrant contravention of Lebanese sovereignty, Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It affirms yet again Israel's disdain for international resolutions, its determination to pursue its aggressive and provocative policy, and the threat which it persistently poses to international peace and security. Lebanon insists that the Security Council must fulfil its duties by taking the appropriate measures to ensure that Israel ceases its violations of Lebanese sovereignty and ends its policy of aggression towards Lebanese territory and citizens. Israel must be held accountable before the international community. UNIFIL conducted an investigation into that Israeli act of aggression and Lebanon expressed its reservations as to the outcome of that investigation. Lebanon lodged a complaint with the Security Council which was issued as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly (A/64/888-S/2010/418).

(h) On Wednesday, 4 August 2010, at 2.39 a.m., an Israeli enemy military launch violated Lebanese territorial waters some 500 metres off Naqurah and approached a Lebanese fishing boat north of the line of buoys. The entry of Israeli naval forces into Lebanese territorial waters constitutes a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty, international law and Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), and a threat to international peace and security. Lebanon lodged a complaint with the Security Council which was issued as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly (A/64/912-S/2010/482).

(i) UNIFIL continues to exert every possible effort to ensure that Israeli forces withdraw completely from the area known as 14B, which is the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar and the uninhabited adjacent area, and the Lebanese Government is continuing to cooperate with UNIFIL with a view to achieving that aim. Notwithstanding those efforts, the Israeli army continues to occupy the aforementioned area, in flagrant violation of its obligations under Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), which provides that Israel must withdraw immediately and unconditionally from the village of Ghajar. Israel's procrastination with regard to withdrawal from the area known as 14B compels us to question the sincerity of Israel's commitment to implementation of that resolution and the extent to which the Security Council is capable of obliging that country to end its occupation. It is incumbent upon the international community to take action to ensure that Israel completely withdraws from the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar and area 14B as soon as possible. The Israeli Government is attempting to prevaricate, regardless of the fact that such withdrawal does not constitute a concession, but is one of the key requirements of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

(j) Lebanon believes that the continued occupation by Israel of the Lebanese Shab'a Farms and Kafr Shuba hills constitutes a threat to stability and security along the whole border. Lebanon requests the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to completely and unconditionally withdraw from all Lebanese territory, and urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations to intensify his efforts to ensure that Israel withdraws from that territory. Lebanon reminds the international community that, under the provisions of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), Israel is obliged to withdraw from the Shab'a Farms and Kafr Shuba hills. It is essential that the remit of UNIFIL should be extended to the Shab'a Farms and Kafr Shuba hills in preparation for the handover of those two areas to the Lebanese State.

(k) Lebanon would like to bring to the attention of the international community yet again the fact that the maps relating to cluster bombs that Lebanon has received from Israel are incomplete and imprecise. Israel dropped those bombs randomly on densely populated civilian areas, thereby causing the death or injury of more than 357 persons, including 34 children and 70 youth. It should once more be underlined that the Government of Lebanon had its doubts about the precision of the maps that it received from Israel, and demands that information should be deposited regarding the dates on which the cluster bombs that were used during the Israeli raids were dropped, together with the quantity and type of those bombs. It should also once again be stressed that the Lebanese Army has asked for aerial photographs or video pictures of the targeted areas before and after the bombardments. Israel bears entire responsibility and should pay compensation for the deaths of numerous Lebanese citizens that have been caused by the cluster bombs and unexploded ammunition that were dropped by Israel during its onslaught on Lebanon, and for the numerous crimes that Israel has committed against Lebanon and its population. Lebanon urges the United Nations and donor countries to continue to address that issue, in order to protect the lives of innocent civilians, and to call for the Lebanon Mine Action Centre to be granted the necessary financial resources to enable it to carry out its mandate.

(l) The Israeli army has continued to use launches to conduct illegal patrols inside Lebanese territorial waters close to the so-called "line of buoys" that was positioned unilaterally and illicitly inside those waters. Israel makes the fraudulent claim that those buoys approximate the southern border of Lebanese territorial waters. The Israeli army has also continued to fire warning shots and launch grenades at Lebanese fishing boats. Furthermore, it regularly detonates explosive charges close to the aforementioned line, inside Lebanese territorial waters. In the twelfth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2010/105), paragraph 29, the Secretary-General warned that those Israeli measures contribute to increasing tension between the parties. Lebanon does not recognize any line that has been put in place unilaterally, and considers that the Israeli measures are a further violation of Lebanese sovereignty and Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). Lebanon requests the United Nations to authorize UNIFIL to put in position in the region a line of buoys that is in keeping with international standards.

(m) On 9 July 2010, Lebanon deposited with the United Nations a map on which the southern maritime border with occupied Palestine is clearly marked, together with the exclusive economic zone of Lebanon. The geographical coordinates of the borders, which were set forth in accordance with international

standards, are specified. On 11 October 2010, Lebanon also deposited with the United Nations two maps designating the south-western maritime borders of the aforementioned economic zone, together with two tables in which are set forth the geographical coordinates of those borders.

3. The Lebanese Army is continuing to strengthen field and strategic cooperation with UNIFIL.

(a) The coordination between the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL is particularly evident in their joint patrols, joint checkpoints and joint military training operations and exercises.

(b) Lebanon stresses the fact that none of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) has made any reference to indications that weapons are smuggled into the UNIFIL area of operations. All weapons that have been seized are remnants of the war conducted against Lebanon by Israel in the summer of 2006. Lebanon further stresses once again that the Lebanese Army and the Lebanese security apparatus have not reported any incidence of weapon smuggling since the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) was submitted to the Security Council.

(c) Israel's claim that weapons are being stockpiled and military installations established in densely populated civilian areas in South Lebanon bears no relation to the truth, and is designed to facilitate the targeting by Israel of innocent Lebanese civilians and justify their slaughter and terrorization, regardless of the fact that all international instruments and, in particular, those of international humanitarian law, outlaw and penalize the targeting of civilians.

(d) Lebanon continues to participate in tripartite meetings that are held with a view to maintaining peace along the Blue Line. Those meetings are the appropriate place in which to address issues pending from resolution 1701 (2006) and flashpoints along the aforementioned Line. Israel's persistence in resorting to unilateral measures undermines those tripartite meetings and the role of UNIFIL in maintaining the peace in its area of operations. Furthermore, those unilateral measures are intended to raise doubt as to the capacity of the Lebanese armed forces to defend the sovereignty of all Lebanese territory, contrary to the spirit of resolution 1701 (2006).

(e) With respect to the positioning of markers along the Blue Line, Lebanon affirms yet again the agreement that was reached at the tripartite meeting with a view to making progress in and accelerating that operation. Israeli procrastination in that regard raises doubts as to its real intentions.

4. Lebanon stresses the importance of strengthening and raising the level of international assistance in building the capacities of the Lebanese Army and security forces and preparing them to perform their duty to defend Lebanese sovereignty and protect the Lebanese people. The Lebanese Army needs reinforcements of arms and ammunition and to acquire more modern means of surveillance and up-to-date communications equipment. It also requires training in the use of all such equipment and apparatus.

5. Notwithstanding the limited capacities and resources of the Lebanese Army, the Government of Lebanon has decided to deploy two additional battalions south of

the Litani river, in order to further demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

6. The issue of monitoring the borders is one of the first priorities of the Government of Lebanon, as is demonstrated by the appointment by the Prime Minister of a minister with responsibility for preparing a comprehensive national border strategy that will be submitted to the ministerial committee for border management, which will submit the strategy to the Cabinet for adoption.

7. At the economic level, we once more support the call that is made to the international community in resolution 1701 (2006) to extend more of the assistance that is necessary for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon. In that connection, we urge States that took part in the Stockholm Conference, Paris III and the Vienna Conference to honour their commitments. Lebanon greatly appreciates all economic and social programmes and humanitarian assistance that UNIFIL provides to the Lebanese people in its area of operations, including projects that have an immediate impact and emergency medical services.

8. If stability and security are to be reinforced, there must be a transition from the situation of a cessation of hostilities to a state of permanent ceasefire.